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DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR 05-0000
REVIEWED BY G.M. Razi DATE May 6, 1982
RDS ☐ or XDS ☐ EXT. DATE
TS AUTH. REASON(S)
ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐
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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE TRIPOLI 555

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT)

SUBJECT : TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY: LIBYAN MERCHANT MARINE

REFERENCE: A) TRIPOLI 252; B) STATE 25401

1. EMBOFFS DISCUSSED POSSIBILITY OF U.S. ASSISTANCE TO LIBYAN MERCHANTMARINE WITH DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF LIBYAN GENERAL MARITIME ORGANIZATION AL-MASRI MARCH 13.

2. AL-MASRI DISCLOSED THAT THERE WAS GOOD POSSIBILITY OF U.N. MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE (WITH U.N. BEARUPASUIHT), AND STATED U.N.-BACKED TRAINING FACILITY FOR SEAMEN MIGHT BE REINSTITUTED IN ALEXANDRIA, PROVIDING EXCELLENT PLACE TO SEND LIBYANS. GREEKS HAVE ALSO MADE AN ATTRACTIVE PROPOSAL. AL-MASRI EMPHASIZED THAT EXPERTISE FROM THESE SOURCES WAS BELOW COST, ALTHOUGH HE REALIZED GREEKS PROBABLY HAVE LONG TERM COMMERCIAL INTERESTS IN MIND. HE ASKED WHETHER U.S. COULD MAKE SIMILAR PROPOSAL.

(2)

3. EMBOFFS EXPLAINED THAT USG SYMPATHETIC, AND THAT SMALL PORTION OF USG-LIBYAN PROGRAM MIGHT, WITH IMAGINATION, BE LABELED "FREE" TO MAKE IT MORE ATTRACTIVE, BUT THAT

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IT WOULD ONLY INCLUDE SHORT TDY'S BY EXPERTS IN THE AREA, ETC. IN GENERAL, U.S. WOULD HAVE TO CHARGE FOR COSTS INVOLVED.

4. AL-MASRI EXPLAINED THAT TRAINING WAS HIS MOST PRESSING NEED, AND ASKED IF SCHOLARSHIPS FOR TUITION COULD BE PROVIDED AT U.S. MERCHANT MARINE ACADEMIES. EMBOFFS REPLIED THAT THIS WAS DOUBTFUL, BUT PROMISED (VAGUELY) TO INQUIRE.

5. QUESTION OF TANKER CHARTER OR PURHCASE WAS AVOIDED UNTIL CLOSE OF CONVERSATION, WHEN AL-MASRI ASKED FOR LIST OF TANKER CHARTERERS IN THE U.S. (EXCLUDING MAJOR OIL COMPANIES). EMBOFFS RESPONDED THAT THEY WERE NOT SURE SUCH SERVICES AVAILABLE IN U.S., AND TRIED TO AVOID QUESTION, BUT AL-MASRI PERSISTED AND ASKED FOR SUCH A LIST.

6. IN GENERAL, WE FEEL IDEA OF REIMBURSABLE MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE FROM USG IS PREMATURE--INITIAL ASSISTANCE WILL BE PROVIDED BY U.N., GREEKS, AND POSSIBLY OTHERS. POSSIBILITY OF TRAINING FOR A FEW SELECTED LIBYANS REMAINS, BUT AL-MASRI'S INSISTENCE ON SOMETHING FOR NOTHING AS SWEETENER GAVE NEGATIVE TONE TO ENTIRE CONVERSATION.

7. NEVERTHELESS, WE WOULD LIKE TO KEEP DOOR AJAR: IT WILL BE SEVERAL YEARS BEFORE LIBYAN MERCHANT MARINE IS IN FULL SWING. WE WOULD APPRECIATE ANSWER TO HIS QUESTION ON U.S. TANKER CHARTERERS, AND SOME GENERAL INFORMATION ON TRAINING POSSIBILITIES IN U.S.
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